

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 00240 140626Z

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 140603Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2332

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0240

STADIS////////////////

FOR EA/ASST. DEPUTY SECRETARY SNEIDER

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, US

SUBJ: "NATION REVIEW" LEAKS

REF: A) CANBERRA 0207; B) CANBERRA 0212

1. SPENT MOST OF MORNING JANUARY 13 PLAYING TENNIS AND DRINKING BEER WITH RENOUF AND WOOLCOTT. WITCH HUNT IS UNDER WAY IN DFA, ADOD AND PM'S DEPARTMENT, BUT THEY ASSUME LEAK WAS FROM MINISTERIAL STAFF. THERE IS ALSO A GROWING FEELING THAT LEAK OCCURRED QUITE RECENTLY. RENOUF INTENDS TO CALL IN ASIO, WHICH WILLESEE HAS APPROVED. RENOUF SAYS PROSECUTION VIRUTALLY OUT OF QUESTION IN VIEW ALP OBSESSION WITH "OPEN GOVERNMENT," LIKELIHOOD OF BAD PUBLICITY, AND LIKELIHOOD GOVERNMENT WOULD LOSE SUIT ANYWAY. THEY ARE QUITE AWARE OF HISTORY OF ELLSBERG CASE. THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT REACTION OF US INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY TO LEAKS, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW MENTION OF CODEWORDS IN "NATIONAL TIMES" JANUARY 12. THIS NEW ARTICLE WILL BE REPORTED IN SEPARATE CHANNELS.

2. AFTER WELL-PUBLICIZED OPENING BLAST, OPPOSITION HAS BEEN QUIET AND SEEMS CHARACTERISTICALLY TO BE MISSING AN OPPORTUNITY, MUCH TO WHITLAM'S RELIEF.

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3. MACCALLUM OF COURSE REFUSES TO NAME HIS SOURCE. HE

TOLD WOOLCOTT HE HAD THREE REASONS FOR WRITING ARTICLE:

- A. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL INTEREST (SIC);
- B. CONVICTION THAT PUBLIC SHOULD BE INFORMED OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES;
- C. TO "GET" MARSHALL GREEN.

THIS THIRD IS DISTURBING. COLUMNIST MAX WALSH SEEMS ALSO TO HAVE DEVELOPED PERSONAL ANIMOSITY TOWARD AMBASSADOR AND THERE HAS BEEN AN ANTI-GREEN EDGE IN OTHER RECENT MEDIA COMMENTARY. I SUSPECT A MINISTERIAL ASSISTANT MAY BE FEEDING THIS LINE TO PRESS (AND POSSIBLY ALSO LEAKING DOCUMENTS). THE ONLY EXPLANATION RENOUF AND WOOLCOTT CAN SEE FOR THE ANTI-GREEN MOTIF IS THAT CRITICS OF US ALLIANCE MAY BELIEVE IT IS AN EFFECTIVE PROPAGANDA GAMBIT TO FOCUS THE US BOGIA IN SYMBOL OF WELL-KNOWN PROFESSIONAL AMBASSADOR WHO HAS SPOKEN UP RATHER SHARPLY ABOUT GOA BEHAVIOR ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

4. WOOLCOTT WILL SEND US A CONFIDENTIAL, PERSONAL LETTER DISASSOCIATING PRESENT DFA LEADERSHIP FROM WALLER'S SLUR (AND IT ADMITTEDLY WAS WALLER'S SLUR) AGAINST CONLON. CONLON SHOULD OF COURSE RETURN NORMALLY TO CANBERRA AFTER HOME LEAVE.

HARROP

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